



KING COUNTY
Healthcare
Coalition

Prepare. Respond. Recover.

Healthcare Coalition Executive Council

Meeting Notes – March 7, 2007

Swedish Medical Center Conference Room A

Council Members Present:

Dr. Tony Woodward, Children's Hospital & Medical Center, Pam MacEwan, Group Health, Johnese Spisso, Harborview, Gayle Ward, Northwest Hospital & Medical Center, Joyce Jackson, Northwest Kidney Centers, Dianna Reeley, Overlake Hospital Medical Center, Anita Geving, Polyclinic, Cal Knight, Swedish Medical Center, Paul Hayes, Valley Medical Center, Patty Mulhern, Visiting Nurses Services

Also Present:

Dr. David Fleming, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Dorothy Teeter, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Chris Martin, Harborview Medical Center, Peter Rigby, Northwest Hospital & Medical Center, Michael Loehr, Public Health – Seattle & King County

Staff Present:

Joe Cropley, Washington Poison Center, Richard Marks, Consultant, Cynthia Dold, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Dr. Jeff Duchin, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Dr. Lewis Robinson, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Lydia Ortega, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Onora Lien, Public Health - Seattle & King County

Introductions

Johnese Spisso called the meeting to order at 3:00pm and welcomed members of the newly formed King County Healthcare Coalition Executive Council and the new Health Director of Public Health Seattle and King County, Dr. David Fleming.

Approval of Preparedness and Response Roles and Coalition Work Plan

Richard Marks reviewed a PowerPoint presentation with the Council on the preparedness and response roles of the Healthcare Coalition and the Executive Council. He also reviewed the Work Plan for the Coalition and 2007 priorities.

ACTION: The Council approved the Healthcare Coalition and Executive Council roles and work plan.

Approval of Executive Council Officers,

Richard Marks presented the proposed chair and vice-chair to the Council - Chair: Johnese Spisso, Harborview Medical Center; Vice Chair: David Grossman, MD, Group Health.

ACTION: The Council approved Johnese Spisso as Chair and Dr. David Grossman as Vice-Chair.

Regional Response Report

Michael Loehr, the Preparedness Manager for Public Health Seattle and King County, presented an overview of the windstorm response and lessons learned. The Regional Medical Resource Center was activated for the first time during the windstorm response to track and acquire resources for nursing homes and hospitals and to collect and coordinate information. An area for improvement is the need for a comprehensive management information system to track healthcare system resources and needs in real time. There is also a need for the RMRC to improve coordination with local and zone Emergency Operation Centers.

The Public Health Communications Team and the Vulnerable Populations Action Team were dispatched to educate immigrant communities about the dangers of carbon monoxide. Areas for improvement include strengthening the link to all Healthcare Coalition members and partners and developing a more focused communications plan that targets strategic outreach to immigrant communities and links them with healthcare providers. Health and human service needs have a direct impact on hospitals and other parts of the healthcare system. Areas for improvement include informing healthcare providers about the location of medical and non-medical shelters to serve people who come to hospitals because they are “safe havens”.

Regional Response Report

Joe Cropley, Washington Poison Center, presented an update on the Puget Sound Call Center Coordination project. The goal of the project is to create a network of call centers that can provide medical phone triage and disseminate up-to-date public health information in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties during a disaster. The call center project was suggested by the Healthcare Coalition Steering Committee and the Ambulatory Care Workgroup. Council members commented that the region should consider the likely demand for information on West Nile Virus this summer. In addition, the project should coordinate its efforts with the Centers for Disease Control and the media. Also, the project should address the possibility that residents of other communities may try to access the service if it is available through a 1-800 number.

New Issues

Emergency Department Saturation

Johnese Spisso discussed the challenges that have been experienced during the ice storms and the windstorm related to hospitals not complying with the regional ED Saturation Policy. The Policy restricts the amount of time that Hospital Emergency Departments can break from receiving patients who are on Basic Life Support (BLS). Hospital ED's can never be on Advanced Life Support (ALS) divert. After review, several hospitals were placing themselves on “ED Saturation” for over 150 hours a week during the snowstorm of November 2006. Other hospitals were going on ALS divert during the response as well. Hospitals have been operating at full capacity since the snowstorm in November of 2006. During the windstorm in December, the situation reached a critical mass. The Council agreed that gathering data over a 6 month period will be critical for addressing the issue.

ACTION: Dr. Lewis Robinson will work with Public Health and Harborview Medical Center leaders to develop a briefing on the issue to present to the Council in June.

Human Resources

The Council discussed staffing shortages that posed a significant challenge to healthcare facilities during the November ice storm and the December windstorm in 2006. Several area hospitals addressed this problem by proactively arranging to transport staff directly to work. In the future, hospitals may have to adjust staffing ratios for intensive care and acute care during emergencies to serve patient demand. In order to address the staffing challenges that would occur in a pandemic or other medical catastrophe, hospitals need to work closely with their employees and their bargaining representatives.

ACTION: Richard Marks will work with Council leaders to develop a strategy to engage unions and bargaining units in preparedness planning and will report back to the Council in June.

Adjournment

Johnese Spisso adjourned the meeting at 5:00pm.

Future Meeting Dates:	June 4, 2007	11.00 – 1.00 pm
	September 14, 2007	8.30 – 10.30 am
	November 29, 2007	2.00 – 4.00 pm